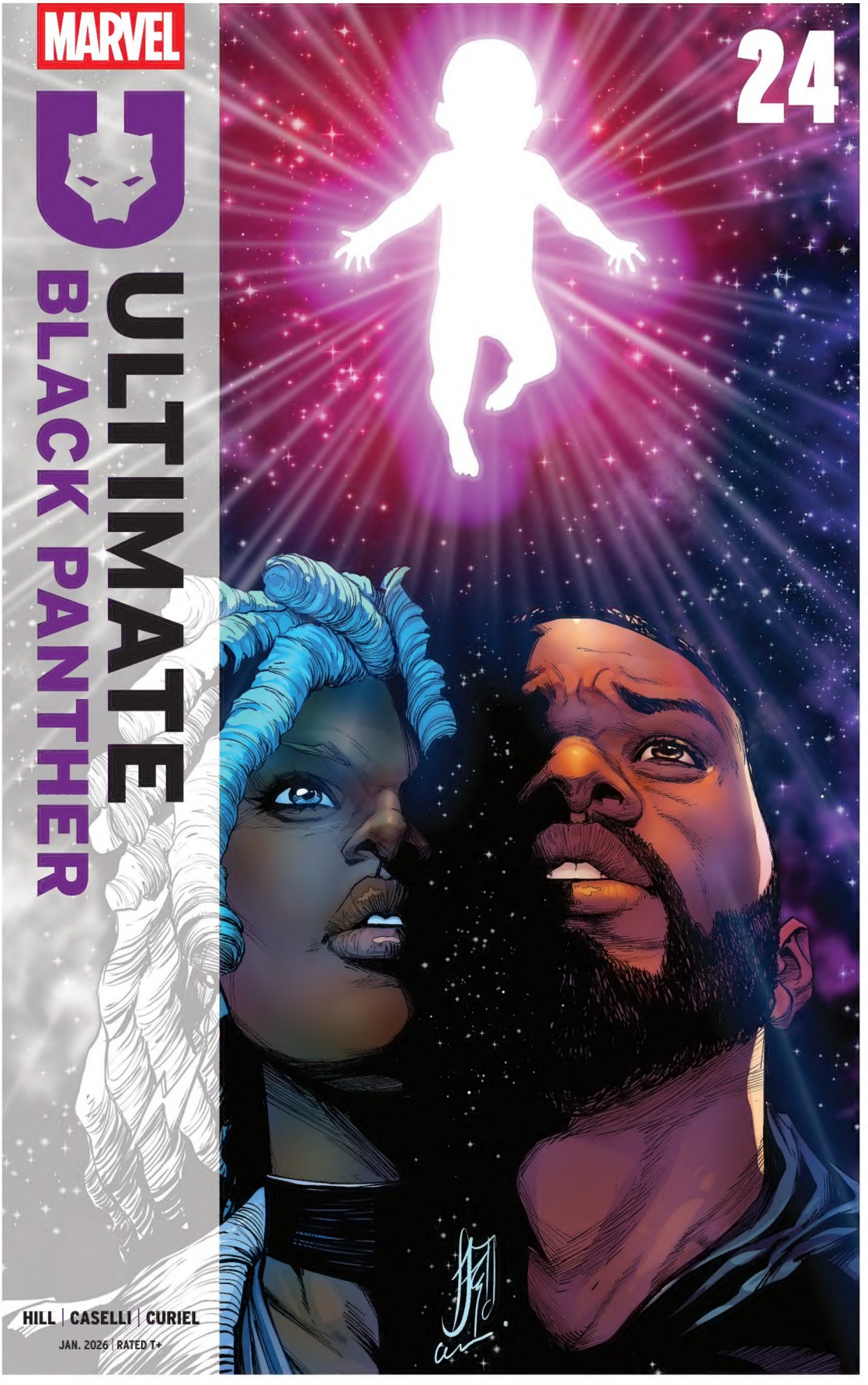
MARVEL
ULTIMATE
BLACK PANTHER
24
HILL | CASELLI | CURIEL
JAN. 2026 | RATED T+

Falling without impact.
The king hears his breath and knows it does not belong to air.
This is the place above all places. The cosmos.
An audience with the eternal.
You are determined.
You destroyed the boy. But not *us*. I have brought you here to bend you down.
I did not come to kneel.
No one does.

Vibranium lives. With our consciousness. It is not a metal. It is a *seed*.
And it will grow. You can slow us. You cannot stop us.
I will stand against you. My kingdom. And my Gods.
Your *Bast*. And how do you know this Goddess does not already belong to us?
How do you know your Goddess isn't *mastered* by us?
Because if you had that power, Earth would already be yours.
I am here. With you. And I am alive.
So you need me.
Your abomination failed. So you need me to be your gateway.
Why? Is your world dying? Have you planted your seeds across the galaxy because you needed an exodus?

And if you have a need. Of me.
Then in this moment, we are equals.
You negotiate.
Foolishly.
You haven't answered my question.
You lead... your kind. Fair enough.
I am also a king. And, yes...
...I am negotiating.
RRAAGH!!

Keep him talking, T'Challa.
And don't let him know you can hear me.
I'm almost with you. Keep it up.
I'm impressed.
You *are* interesting, T'Challa of... *Wakanda.*
What do you want?
You got it to nudge. Look at you.
Peace. Through strength.
And if we don't want peace?

I'm right behind you, King.
Khonshu and Ra failed you. The Vodu-Khan failed you. Your bastard failed you.
I think your people, and your world, are withering.

I sense fear in you.
You're not a god-race. You just have time. Ancients. That's all you are.

Colonizers.

I gotta be slick about this. I don't think it can see me.
Cross your fingers, King. I'm running an improv here.

You think you can stand against us forever?
Human king.

I don't think you *have* forever.
That's right.
Buy me a little more time.
Oh. I think we're made.
Deception!
Not deception.
Just some good ol' magic.
I'll take it from here, King.
Time to go home.

I'm over here.
I've seen cool under pressure before.
But being dragged into a cosmic astral plane and arguing with the thing waiting for you there?
Impressive.
Inan. You're not dead?
I'm the Sorcerer Supreme.
I can separate my consciousness from my mortal form--just in case a cosmic being wants to take a pal into another dimension to gloat.
I'll get this "no body" thing worked out soon.
I assume you didn't settle things with Ancient Alien God Man?
No.
But I know what to do.

"Once, I believed a *crown* could protect a nation.
"Now I know... only a *people* can.

"We have bled. We have erred.
Interconnected towns. Villages. Shared resources. Wakanda's resources helping your nation.

"We have lived through the arrogance of isolation.

"And we have learned what our enemies never will.

"Vibranium does not make us strong.
"*Purpose* makes us strong."

They need to hear from you, King. How much will you tell them?
I'll tell them what my father wouldn't.
My family! My nation!
Our ancestors taught us to hide. Our pain taught us to harden.
"But we were never made for fear. Or isolation."
We are not safe, my people. Neither is the world.
But we have *time* to prepare.
Today, Wakanda will join the world. With our knowledge. And our power. We are no longer a kingdom in isolation!

"We will not ask the world for permission to lead. We will lead by making the world safer.
"Power shared is power multiplied."
The Progenitors will return. To test our borders...and our souls.
"Let them. We have learned the shape of their hunger."
We have survived kings and colonizers.
Found new brothers as they fight their own wars.

On my word. There is no grass or ground on this continent that will not be safe for you.
"When we see drought...
"...we will bring rain."
The New Wakandan Age has begun!
"We will send our hands to lift, our minds to teach, our hearts to mend."
And we will forgive ourselves for the mistakes we have made.

"To our neighbors: We offer alliance without ownership. Prosperity without plunder.
"We are *not* colonizers."
PAX WAKANDA
We will master the vibranium in Wakanda--
"--with the same will I master the vibranium in my blood."
It's woven into you. Progressing.
I have enough time, Okoye.
I have not forgotten your time with Ororo. But I understand. Our marriage is tradition. Always has been. But the tradition does have a purpose, T'Challa.
Wakanda needs an heir. A *real* heir.
"Let the world tune to us."

My father spoke of glory and permanence. The morning he died in front of you.
I cannot promise permanence.
No man can.
"I promise *resistance.*
"There *are* forces in this world, just as antagonistic as the forces we know are beyond it."
They will come for us. They will come for *me.*

"But I will only kneel--
"--to the Great Mysteries that guide me.
"Our kingdom will have seats around the world. To all descended from us. To all that have never known of us.
"We will teach them what they deserve.
"And help them claim what they are owed."
We are *reparation.* We are *justice.*
We may not be permanent.
But Wakanda *is forever!*
Wakanda forever!
Storm.
Queen.
WAKANDA FOREVER!

Strong words.
Required action.
I have time.
I have time.
The North American Union.
Wakanda. They're an issue.

Who gave them permission to change the power of the world?
Not us.
They're stabilizing zones with energy we can't meter, price or cut.
PAX WAKANDA INITIATIVE
CONTINGENCY
Third-lane diplomacy, non-dollar aid, cultural nodes. And they're uniting African blocs without us.
The assumption was Africa stays optional.
And now Wakanda wants to be inevitable.

Media Narratives
Resource Pressure
Leadership Vulnerabilities
Proxy Capacities
We've done this before. Pressure points. Narrative work. Friendly hands.
And if that fails?
VIBRANIUM ACQUISITION PRIVATE CONTRACTORS
It never does.
We can't hand the world to people the color of mud. Where would that leave *us?*
The Maker's Council is falling, but a European alliance should still be easy. Common interest.
"Wakanda forever."
King T'Challa. You don't have that much *time.*
I'll prepare the first actions.
OPERATION:
COUNTER-STANDARD --
STANDBY

Shuri said you wanted to speak with me. I can return if--
No. Stay.
Please.
What did--?
Can I *trust* you, Erik?
Always.
I'm telling a lie. To Wakanda. To Africa.
A lie that both need to believe.
The lie of *time*.

My bloodline is corrupt, Erik. This blade taught me that. The cosmic forces that came to rule, I am *tied* to them.
And there is nothing I can do about that.
It is simply a matter of time.
I will have no heirs. Okoye and I have spoken of it. I will make my mission to expand Wakanda. To reshape Africa itself.
I will make what we are have meaning.
But I will not defeat what resides in me. I still hear them. Feel them. Their consciousness. I hear whispers in the walls of Wakanda.
Do you understand?
I do.
You are brave, Erik. Brave enough to protect what we build when our enemies come to destroy us.
And I will lead us, as long as I am able.
But I need you to promise me something. On your word.
When I ask you. And I will.
Promise me you will kill me. End my bloodline. Take my throne. Start this anew.
For Wakanda, will you promise me?

Wakanda forever.
THE END.